

VZCZCXRO7477
PP RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH
DE RUEHGP #0915 0810711
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 220711Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9266
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1612
RUEANHA/FAA NATIONAL HQ WASHDC
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 000915

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [FAIR](#) [ELTN](#) [EWWT](#) [ECON](#) [SN](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON MINISTER OF TRANSPORT YEO
CHEOW TONG

11. (SBU) Summary: The United States appreciates Singapore's implementation of maritime security programs such as the Container Security Initiative and Megaports, the Ambassador told Transportation Minister Yeo Cheow Tong in a March 17 courtesy call. The Ambassador stressed that Singapore needed to do more to monitor transshipped and transit cargo, which comprises 80 percent of Singapore's throughput. Minister Yeo said that Singapore welcomed U.S. participation in future transportation disaster drills. End summary.

PORT SECURITY

12. (SBU) Noting that container shipping security was an important issue for a transport hub like Singapore, Minister Yeo said that he had briefly discussed this with Transportation Secretary Mineta at the January 12-13 Ministerial Conference on International Transport Security in Tokyo. He asserted that Singapore's efficiency in processing the more than 23 million containers that pass through the port annually depended in part on not having to collect manifest data on transshipped and transit cargo. Acknowledging that efficiency was important, the Ambassador stressed that Singapore must strike a balance between transport efficiency and security. She underscored the risk that WMD could pass undetected through Singapore en route to a U.S. or other port as well as the potential danger to Singapore of an offloaded but unchecked container awaiting transfer. Minister Yeo acknowledged the risks, explaining that Singapore Customs was focused on this issue.

OPEN SKIES

13. (SBU) In reference to the Tokyo meetings, Minister Yeo praised Secretary Mineta's astute management of U.S. transportation matters. He noted that Singapore, like the United States, was an "open skies" proponent. He expressed disappointment about Australia's recent decision to block Singapore Airlines from the Sydney-Los Angeles route. Singapore was still "knocking on Australia's door" in an effort to obtain an "open skies" agreement, he said.

DISASTER DRILLS

14. (SBU) Asked about allowing appropriate U.S. officials to observe transportation disaster drills in order to better assist American citizens, Minister Yeo said that Singapore encouraged U.S. participation and that the United States could play an important role. It was important to share ideas and experiences about disaster response and

preparedness, he concluded.
HERBOLD